

What is a nature journal?

Explorers, scientists, naturalists, and artists carry notebooks for writing down thoughts and observations, drawing pictures of the plants and animals they see, making maps of the new places they visit, and taking notes about how the world changes around them.



Why should you keep a nature journal?

A nature journal is a way to keep track of your adventures while allowing room to explore the excitement, wonder and curiosity about what you're seeing. Through its pages, you can get to know nature whether you are adventuring in your own back yard, your neighborhood, or your local park or forest.

How to get started?

Grab some paper and something to write with. You're ready to go!

You can use a notebook or sketchbook, you can make a booklet out of folding several sheets of paper together, or you can use a clipboard or a hardcover book with a piece of paper laid on it. You don't need anything fancy. What's important is what you put into the notebook.



Don't try and write your nature journal on your smartphone or tablet. The other features of your device are too distracting. Do it the old fashioned way by taking the time to absorb the world around you, slowly choosing the words and carefully forming the letters on the page. You'll think more about what you write down if it takes more than the tap of a finger to erase a paragraph.



You don't need to worry about a grade or a score for your nature journal. There is no wrong way to do it. Simply find a quiet spot to look, listen, and simply exist. Sit in your backyard or on your front step, walk to a park, or look out your window. Spend 10 minutes watching the world before you even open your notebook.

Now write down your thoughts and the things you see. Draw pictures of the world around you as you see it, or draw something from your imagination. Press a leaf between the pages of your journal. Use a long grass stem as a bookmark. Draw in it with a piece of charcoal from a campfire. Look over what you've written. If you sit in the same spot at the same time tomorrow, will you write the same thing? Try it and see.

"In every walk with Nature one receives far more than he seeks" – John Muir